

# THE MILITANT

INSIDE

**No recovery for workers, despite UK gov't claims**  
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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 78/NO. 4 FEBRUARY 3, 2014

## Renew and help expand 'Militant' readership

BY EMMA JOHNSON

Supporters of the *Militant* are working to expand the number of long-term readers by convincing subscribers to renew and continuing to sell the paper door to door in working-class neighborhoods, on picket lines and at political events.

Nearly 3,000 signed up for a subscription during last fall's campaign. Hundreds also bought books on working-class history and politics published by Pathfinder Press. Many of these subscriptions will expire in the coming weeks. If yours is one of them, we urge you to renew.

New and renewing readers around the world bought more than 750 copies of the nine books on special during the fall drive. This offer is still available. (See ad on page 3.)

"We have integrated the renewal work into our regular door-to-door campaigning," reported David Rosenfeld, who organizes efforts to expand the paper's readership in Des Moines, Iowa. "On Jan. 19 one team started by dropping by the homes of a number of readers whose subscriptions had

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## Ukrainians defy new law attacking right to protest

Fight against Russian boot fuels ongoing actions



Reuters/Gleb Garanich

Protest in Kiev, Ukraine, Jan. 19. Some demonstrators wore saucepans and masks to mock law curtailing protest rights that included ban on balaclava face coverings and helmets.

BY SETH GALINSKY

Some 100,000 people demonstrated in Kiev, Ukraine's capital, Jan. 19 to demand repeal of new laws that curtail the right to protest. Underlying months of anti-government protests are national aspirations of the Ukrainian people, who — with the exception of the early years of the Russian Revolution — have lived

for centuries under Russian domination.

Ukraine President Viktor Yanukovich pushed through the law in an attempt to undercut protests that began in November when he backed out of a deal to sign a trade and "association" agreement with the European Union and instead moved to maintain close economic and political ties with the government of Russian President Vladimir Putin.

At the time hundreds of thousands

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## Profits before life and limb: two killed in Omaha plant

BY RUTH ROBINETT

OMAHA, Neb. — Keith Everett, 53, and David Ball, 47, were killed while working in an animal feed plant here that collapsed after a large explosion. The owners of International Nutrition have declined to comment on what caused the collapse on the morning of Jan. 20 or on the company's history of disregard for workers' safety.

There were 38 employees in the factory when the three-story building collapsed. Most were able to escape. Seventeen workers were reported injured, at least 10 of whom were hospitalized, four in critical condition. Firefighters rescued five who were trapped in the rubble.

"It doesn't surprise me," Joe Gale, 35, told the *Militant*. He worked at International Nutrition 12 years ago. Today he is employed at a plant that manufactures agricultural combines. "The place was not safe. There were a lot of things in the air that were not good for us to breathe."

"You have to be fair on both sides. Go through the investigation," said Phil Stewart, who works at a glass factory. "But money is always a factor."

Erik Ocampo, a worker on the pro-

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## Port workers in Chile strike for rights of day laborers, back pay



Reuters/Eliseo Fernández

Dockworkers at 15 ports in Chile joined solidarity strike with workers at Angamos port fighting for day laborers to have same rights. Above, strikers at Valparaíso port Jan. 8.

BY SETH GALINSKY

Thousands of longshore workers went on strike at 15 ports in Chile Jan. 14. The workers walked off the job in solidarity with longshoremen at the Angamos port who went on strike three weeks earlier demanding day laborers work under the same conditions as permanent employees.

"The day laborers don't have the

right to paid vacations, a health care plan, a pension based on years of service or an education bonus," Enrique Solar, a longshoreman at the Angamos port and spokesperson for the Chile Port Workers Union, said by phone Jan. 18. "We all do the same work. We should get the same benefits."

Some 95 percent of Chile's foreign

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## Obama says must keep spy 'tools,' seeks to legitimize gov't intrusions

BY JOHN STUDER

President Barack Obama gave a speech Jan. 17 the purpose of which, he said, was to "give the American people greater confidence that their rights are being protected, even as our intelligence and law enforcement agencies maintain the tools."

The National Security Agency's data mining program, which captures billions of "metadata" records

of phone calls and other communications all over the world, has "never been subject to vigorous public debate," Obama said from the offices of the Department of Justice.

Of course the entire program was

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**Government spying is attack on workers' rights**  
— editorial p. 9

## IRS moves to revoke IFCO's tax exemption

BY SARA LOBMAN

NEW YORK — The Interreligious Foundation for Community Organization has received a report from the Internal Revenue Service recommending that IFCO be stripped of its tax-exempt status retroactive to Jan. 1, 2009.

In December attorney Martin Sto-

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### Also Inside

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# Women’s rights supporters in Malaysia defend abortion

BY LINDA HARRIS  
AND BASKARAN APPU

PENANG, Malaysia — “We are providing a needed service,” Tan Saw Imm, manager at Klinik Rakyat, told *Militant* correspondents who visited the clinic here Dec. 2. It is the only clinic in Malaysia that openly provides abortions.

Some 3,000 women from all over Malaysia come to the clinic every year to get their pregnancies terminated. An increasing number are migrant workers from Indonesia, Bangladesh, Burma and other South and Southeast Asian countries. “We treat them, whether they have papers or not,” Tan told us.

Dr. Choong Sim-Poey started providing abortion services at the clinic 35 years ago. There are now two other doctors and 15 staff working there. The doctors rotate between Klinik Rakyat and the maternity hospital downtown where they perform the abortion procedure up to the 15th week of pregnancy.

The clinic is challenging new government regulations stipulating that abortions can only be performed at licensed hospitals that are wheelchair accessible, forcing the clinic to stop performing abortions in their upstairs facilities, Choong said in a Jan. 9 phone interview.

Choong is co-chair of the Reproductive Rights Advocacy Alliance Malaysia, formed in February 2007 to defend women’s right to contraceptives and abortion. The group has organized workshops around the country, state by state, to explain the legal status of abortion.

In 1989 the penal code was amended

to permit abortions if a doctor deems the pregnancy injurious to a woman’s physical or mental health. It is estimated that more than 90,000 abortions are performed in Malaysia every year. But most people, including many doctors, do not know that abortion is legal.

A survey by the Advocacy Alliance of 120 doctors and nurses found that 43 percent responded wrongly about the legalities of abortion.

The “stigma attached to abortion is very strong,” Tan said. Many believe that Islam does not permit abortion, but 65 percent of the women who come to Klinik Rakyat for the procedure are Muslim.

In Malaysia interpretation of sharia law, which Muslims in the country are obliged to follow, permits abortion under certain conditions during the first four months of pregnancy.

During the 1980s women in Malaysia entered the workforce in growing numbers, particularly as manufacturing developed. Today about 44 percent of women are employed. “This right to reproductive choice is as critical to women’s equality as fair access to education and employment and their personal choice in marriage,” Choong said.

There are about 240 clinics nationally that offer some abortion services, but they are costly, secretive and unregulated. It is estimated that 27 out of 100,000 women die every year as a result of infection from unsafe abortions.

According to the alliance, the cost of an abortion runs between 800 and 1,500 ringgit (US\$240 – \$450), which is prohibitive for many working-class women. The minimum monthly wage in



Rita Lee

From left, Tan Saw Imm and Dr. Surinder Kaur, at Klinik Rakyat in Malaysia, where abortions are provided, speak with *Militant* reporters Linda Harris and Baskaran Appu Dec. 2.

Malaysia is 900 ringgit. Klinik Rakyat provides inexpensive terminations.

Cheaper medication abortion is not available in Malaysia. In 2011 Choong was prosecuted and fined for providing it at his clinic.

Over the last 20 years, the rate of contraceptive use has remained at the same low level.

Women under 18 years old are required to have parental (or a close relative’s) consent to have an abortion, Tan said. Unwanted teenage pregnancies

are a factor in suicides and the abandonment of babies.

In February 2011 the *New Straits Times* reported one baby is abandoned every 10 days in the Klang Valley region around the capital Kuala Lumpur. Since 2005, more than 500 babies have been found abandoned nationwide, about half of them dead.

“Abortion is still not openly discussed,” Choong told the *Militant*, “but attitudes are changing among the younger generation.”

## ‘This one is for you, Isaac’

*Below is a note sent by Anthony Dutrow in Miami along with a check to the Socialist Workers Party Capital Fund, turning a “blood money” bribe from the boss into a contribution to build the communist party. Bonuses and other payouts by bosses to convince us to accept speedup, wage cuts, concession contracts and dangerous working conditions are a political cornerstone of the fund, which finances long-range work of the party.*

I’m proud to send a check for \$99.22, equal to this year’s so-called “profit-sharing” bonus. I work at a stamping plant churning out brass, zinc, and steel grommets, plugs, eyelets, and other parts for a variety of industries, including for military accessories. Since it moved from New York and set up its union-free operations here in 1960, workers have no rights to protest wages or safety conditions.

Several weeks ago, a Haitian co-worker was sent temporarily to the department I work in. He said that he started working in the shipping department over 20 years ago when he was 30. A few days before he told the bosses he couldn’t keep lifting 200-pound barrels by hand — the bosses don’t even provide come-along pulleys or other nonmechanical lifting devices. He told me his back was getting worse and worse so they sent him over with us to decide if he wanted to keep his job. The bosses’ offer: to train him in “proper” lifting methods. Isaac, this one is for you.

## The Militant

Vol. 78/No. 4

Closing news date: January 22, 2014

Editor: Doug Nelson

**Editorial volunteers:** Róger Calero, Naomi Craine, Seth Galinsky, Eleanor García, Emma Johnson, Jacob Perasso, Gerardo Sánchez, John Studer, Brian Williams, Rebecca Williamson.

Published weekly except for one week in January, one week in July, one week in August and two weeks in September.

**Business manager:** Lea Sherman  
The Militant (ISSN 0026-3885), 306 W. 37th Street, 13th floor, New York, NY 10018. **Telephone:** (212) 244-4899  
**Fax:** (212) 244-4947  
**E-mail:** [themilitant@mac.com](mailto:themilitant@mac.com)  
**Website:** [www.themilitant.com](http://www.themilitant.com)

Correspondence concerning subscriptions or changes of address should be addressed to the Militant, 306 W. 37th Street, 13th floor, New York, NY 10018.

Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY.

**POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to the Militant, 306 W. 37th Street, 13th floor, New York, NY 10018.

**SUBSCRIPTIONS: United States:** For one year send \$35 to above address.

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## THE MILITANT

### Fight police brutality from UK to US!

*In capitalist society the role of police is to protect the interests of wealthy property owners and keep working people in their place. The ‘Militant’ covers fights against police brutality and frame-ups — from Chicago to New York to London. Don’t miss an issue!*



Militant/Jonathan Silberman

Hundreds protest in north London over ruling cop killing of Mark Duggan was “lawful.”

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# Expand ‘Militant’ readership

**Continued from front page**  
just run out. We got one renewal and several subscribers asked us to check back with them in a couple of weeks.”

Tray Rochon, who runs a neighborhood barbershop, renewed when supporters visited him. After discussing the ongoing campaign to win freedom for the Cuban Five, which the *Militant* covers weekly, he volunteered to come up with a list of people who would be interested in getting involved.

Tom Baumann from Miami reported that he was invited to give a talk on “The Cuban Revolution in the World Today” at the Deerfield Progressive Forum in Deerfield Beach, Fla., Jan. 4.

Baumann said he described how workers and farmers of Cuba made their revolution, transforming themselves in the process. He spoke about Cuba’s role in defeating the apartheid South African army in Angola, and the importance of

building the fight to win freedom for the Cuban Five.

“I also described the response we get selling the *Militant* and communist literature, and talking about the fight to free the Five, door to door, at the Miami book fair and on the job,” Baumann said.

“Our table was swarmed,” he said. “We sold three subscriptions, four copies of *Cuba and Angola: Fighting for Africa’s Freedom and Our Own* and five of *The Cuban Five: Who They Are, Why They Were Framed, Why They Should Be Free*.”

The *Militant* supported and wrote about the 20-month fight by workers locked out by American Crystal Sugar at plants in the Upper Midwest that ended in April last year. Many of those battling the lockout got introductory subscriptions. Several have now become long-term readers.

Brian Berg in Mayville, N.D., just sent in his second one-year renewal, reported Frank Forrestal in Minneapolis. Berg said he likes how the paper takes “our side” in whatever is going on in the world and that it has a lot of truth in it.

Morris Gilbertson, who works at American Crystal’s Drayton, N.D., plant, recently renewed for a year. “He said he likes the ‘25, 50, 75 years’ column and reprints from Pathfinder Books of the Month — the long history,” Forrestal said. During the lockout Gilbertson picked up all four Pathfinder volumes on the battles of the Teamsters union and its revolutionary leadership in the Upper Midwest during the 1930s.

Matthew Herring, who works at McDonald’s, subscribed at a December protest by fast-food workers in Chicago. After further discussions he agreed to speak at a Jan. 17 Militant Labor Forum on the fight to raise the minimum wage.

## NY forum on Cuban Revolution promotes new books



Militant/Dan Fein

NEW YORK — Some 50 people attended a Militant Labor Forum here Jan. 18 titled, “55th Anniversary of the Cuban Revolution and the Coming American Revolution.” Speaker Dave Prince of the Socialist Workers Party pointed to a number of books soon to be available from Pathfinder Press that the party will be organizing to get in the hands of working people.

Attractive posters of the covers of the eight new titles were on display at the forum hall, lining the front of the room and along the walls. They include the English and Spanish editions of *I Will Die the Way I’ve Lived*, illustrated and explaining 15 watercolors by Antonio Guerrero for the 15th anniversary of the imprisonment of the Cuban Five; *Voices from Prison* in English and Spanish that shows the respect the Five won among fellow workers behind bars; a Spanish edition of *Cosmetics, Fashions, and the Exploitation of Women*; a new edition in English and Spanish of *Socialism on Trial*, testimony by leaders of the Minneapolis Teamsters and the SWP who were framed up during a 1941 trial under the Smith “Gag” Act; and *Fifty Years of Covert Operations in the U.S.: Washington’s Political Police and the American Working Class*, a new edition in Spanish and soon to be available as a separate book in English.

Posters of the book covers were displayed at a Militant Labor Forum in San Francisco the same evening where Norton Sandler of the SWP spoke on the civil war in Syria, U.S. foreign policy and recent events in Iran and Iraq.

— BRIAN WILLIAMS

## —MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

### CALIFORNIA

#### San Francisco

**Capitalism Threatens Soil and Worker.** Fri., Jan. 31, 7:30 p.m. 5482 Mission St. Tel.: (415) 584-2135.

### FLORIDA

#### Miami

**Protests in Ukraine: Workers Fight for Political Space.** Fri., Jan. 31, 7:30 p.m. 7100 Biscayne Blvd., Suite 306A. Tel.: (305) 757-8869.

### GEORGIA

#### Atlanta

**Conflict in Ukraine Grows as Moscow Vies for Influence with Washington, Europe.** Speaker: Susan LaMont, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Jan. 31, 7:30 p.m. 777 Cleveland Ave. SW, Suite 103. Tel.: (678) 528-7828.

### IOWA

#### Des Moines

**The International Fight to Defend a Woman’s Right to Abortion.** Speaker: Helen Meyers, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Jan. 31, 7:30 p.m. 3707 Douglas Ave. Tel.: (515) 707-1779.

### MINNESOTA

#### Minneapolis

**What Points to the Road Forward for Working People?** The “Citizens’ Revolution” in Ecuador or Cuba’s Proletarian Revolution? Speaker: Jacob Perasso, Socialist Workers Party, participant in recent World Festival of Youth and Students in Ecuador. Sat., Feb. 1, 7:30 p.m. 416 E. Hennepin Ave., Room 214. Tel.: (612) 729-1205.

### WASHINGTON

#### Seattle

**Class Struggle and Social Contradictions in Israel Today.** Speaker: Mary Martin, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Jan. 31, 7:30 p.m. 5418 Rainier Ave. S. Tel.: (206) 323-1755.

### CANADA

#### Montreal

**Class Struggle and Social Contradictions in Israel Today.** Speaker: Annette Kouri, Communist League. Fri., Jan. 31, 7:30 p.m. 7107 St-Denis, Room 204. Tel.: (514) 272-5840.

### NEW ZEALAND

#### Auckland

**‘Socialism on Trial’: What Working People Can Learn from 1941 Court Testimony of Working-Class Leader James P. Cannon Facing U.S. Government Frame-Up.** Speaker: Felicity Coggan, Communist League. Fri., Jan. 31, 7 p.m. Donation: \$5 waged, \$2 unwaged. 4/125 Grafton Road. Tel.: (09) 369-1223.

Herring told forum participants that he’d been trying to get co-workers to the action, but some are afraid of being fired. He described how he organized house meetings to discuss the need to

fight for higher wages.

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on page 8

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The Living Example of the Cuban Revolution  
**by Asela de los Santos, Mary-Alice Waters and others**  
\$3 with subscription (regular \$7)



# 18th World Youth Festival hosted in Quito, Ecuador

BY PAUL PEDERSON

QUITO, Ecuador — Some 7,000 delegates participated in the 18th World Festival of Youth and Students Dec. 7-13 under the slogan, “Youth Unite against Imperialism, for a World of Peace, Solidarity and Social Transformation.” Hosted by the Ecuadorean government, the weeklong event took place in a park in the center of the capital, high in the Andean mountains.

Each day was dedicated to a region of the world and a political theme. In workshops, conferences and cultural events, participants debated a range of political questions from unemployment and the world economic crisis to anti-colonial struggles, the civil war in Syria, ecological devastation and the fights for women’s liberation and right to abortion.

A Friendship Fair included displays from each country and political literature from participating organizations. An Anti-Imperialist Tribunal featured testimony on imperialist wars of conquest, occupations and exploitation throughout Latin America, Africa, Asia and the Pacific.

Delegates from about 80 countries participated, the majority from the Americas. Africa had the second-largest presence, including hundreds from Namibia and Angola. Fifty-five came from Western Sahara, where the Saharawi people have been fighting occupation by the Moroccan monarchy for more than 35 years. Vietnam and North Korea had the largest delegations from Asia. Nearly 80 came from Canada; 34 from the United States.

A delegation from Puerto Rico included Clarisa López Ramos, daughter of Puerto Rican political prisoner Oscar López Rivera, a fighter for Puerto Rican independence who has been incarcerated in the U.S. for 32 years. López Ramos spoke about the fight to free her father and the Puerto Rican independence struggle.

About 800 came from Colombia, where the Cuban government is helping broker peace negotiations between the government of Juan Manuel Santos and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) to bring an end to a nearly five-decade guerrilla war that has been an obstacle to the organization and struggles of working people. The result has been a gradual opening of political space for workers and farmers, who faced decades of government repression from police, military forces and rightist paramilitary organizations.

“This was the first strike I’ve participated in,” said Ismael Guetio, 25, a farmer from the town of Cauca, Colombia, who spoke in a workshop about a recent struggle by farmers.

Guetio described how peasants are unable to cover the costs of production at the prices they receive and spoke against the Colombian government’s free trade accord with Washington. “For us it means the elimination of the Colombian peasant,” Guetio said, describing the flood of cheap imports that are ruining small farmers.

The festival was coordinated by the World Federation of Democratic Youth, which was established in 1945 during World War II by youth groups affiliated to Communist parties allied with Moscow. Following an eight-year break in the festivals after the fall of the Soviet Union, the Union of Young Communists (UJC) of Cuba and other organizations led an effort to revive the festival and win participation from a wider range of anti-imperialist youth organizations around the world. For more than four decades, most festivals took place in Europe. Since 1997 they have taken place in Cuba, Algeria, Venezuela, South Africa and Ecuador.

## Anti-imperialist trade blocs

“Our country decided to break with the tutelage of the World Bank and IMF and the imperial powers,” Ecuadorean foreign minister Ricardo Patiño said in a talk on the foreign policy of Ecuadorean President Rafael Correa.

Patiño said the government ended its lease for a U.S. military base on Ecuador’s Pacific coast; renegotiated and paid off its foreign debt; took steps to keep a greater share of the wealth extracted from oil and mining operations in the country; declined to establish a free trade accord with Washington; and joined trade blocs with other Latin American governments to counter those dominated by U.S. imperialism.

The Cuban delegation of more than 200 organized a program of activities at a tent dedicated to the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America, an economic and trade bloc of nine Latin American countries organized in 2004 on the initiative of the Cuban and Venezuelan governments. A year later the Venezuelan government launched PetroCaribe, which provides Cuba and 13 other Caribbean countries with Venezuelan oil at preferential prices, weakening the stranglehold of imperialist-



Militant photos/Laura Anderson

Some 7,000 delegates from 80 countries, mostly from the Americas and Africa, came together at the 18th World Festival of Youth and Students in Quito, Ecuador, Dec. 7-13.

dominated oil monopolies.

A workshop on the international fight to free the Cuban Five featured Irma González and Ailí Labañino, daughters of René González and Ramón Labañino — two of five revolutionaries framed up and jailed by Washington. Also on the panel were Miguel Colina, National Bureau member of the UJC, and Miguel Borell Alfonso, whose grandfather was among the 73 passengers killed in the 1976 bombing of a Cuban commercial airliner by CIA-trained anti-communist mercenaries. Irma González urged the more than 150 delegates in attendance to broaden the fight to free the Five.

“Washington is trying to squeeze, in every way, any economic help to Cuba,” said Colina.

## What is a socialist revolution?

The delegations from several organizations in Ecuador, including the ruling Alianza Pais party’s youth organization, promoted what the Correa government has coined “The Socialist Revolution of Good Living.” This refers to a program of reforms aimed at spurring capitalist economic development with less dependence on Washington and using a greater share of profits from oil exports to finance social programs and public works — a perspective with similarities to the Bolivian government’s Movement Toward Socialism party, and the Venezuelan government’s “Socialism of the 21st Century.”

At the heart of some debates at the festival were counterposed views of socialism representing conflicting class interests. Many advocated electing progressive politicians to government who would enact reforms and run social programs for the benefit of working people. A minority put forward the view that capitalism has nothing to offer the world’s toilers and advocated the overthrow of capitalism through the revolutionary conquest of political power by the working class, as Cuba’s workers and farmers did in 1959.

In one exchange during a panel discussion, Ecuadorean anthropologist Ninfa Patiño said Correa is leading “a revolution in higher education, to be competitive on an international level,” pointing to Yachay, a large university being built in the north.

Jacobo Andi, a Quechua from Ecuador’s Amazon province of Pastaza who supports Correa, spoke from the floor to say that the government’s reforms don’t address the fact that few indigenous people can pass the university entrance exams because in the Amazon region and other rural areas they lack access to adequate teaching.

Panelist Hugo Wils, a member of the Young Socialists in the United Kingdom, pointed to the fraud of capitalist education reform. “Under capitalism, workers are taught to be obedient,” he said. “They seek to convince us that the rich are rich because they are smart and that we are workers because we are not as intelligent.”

The capitalist rulers can modify their system of indoctrination, said Wils, but the class-differentiated character and purpose of education under capitalism will remain the same. To transform education into something worthy of working, creating humanity requires the transformation of the working class through the fight for political power as was done in Cuba.

Adiro Fajardo, a Cuban art instructor, pointed to the example of the Cuban Revolution, which in 1961 mobilized hundreds of thousands of young volunteers to teach workers and peasants how to read, virtually wiping out illiteracy in one year.

Communists from the United States, United Kingdom, New Zealand and Canada sold 816 books on revolutionary working-class politics along with 26 *Militant* subscriptions during the seven-day event.

Fifty-seven delegates picked up *Is Socialist Revolution in the U.S. Possible?* by Mary-Alice Waters. More than 100 copies of *The Cuban Five: Who They Are, Why They Were Framed, Why They Should be Free* in English, Spanish and French were sold. Dozens bought copies of *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* by Jack Barnes and *The First and Second Declarations of Havana*, speeches read by Fidel Castro in meetings of more than 1 million in Havana in 1960 and 1962 that laid out the socialist course of Cuba’s workers and farmers and sounded a call for revolutionary struggle in Latin America.



Militant/Laura Anderson

Gerardo Sánchez, right, promotes books on revolutionary, working-class politics. Participants picked up 816 copies along with 26 *Militant* subscriptions. Top seller was *The Cuban Five*.



# California hospital nurses protest layoffs, outsourcing

BY BETSEY STONE

BERKELEY, Calif. — “No staffing, no peace,” chanted nurses picketing here Jan. 15 against layoffs, outsourcing and cutbacks in patient care at two hospitals owned by Sutter Health in Berkeley and Oakland.

The nurses say the company is violating the contract it signed with the union at two Alta Bates Summit Medical Center hospitals three months ago. The contract was won after nine short strikes at Sutter hospitals by the California Nurses Association over the last two years.

“Management settled with the union and then turned around and did this!” physical therapist Mary Biagini told the *Militant*. Management is closing the postoperative nursing unit where Biagini works and instead sending patients to nursing homes for treatment. “It’s not just the nurses, but the patients who will suffer from this,” Biagini said.

The hospital is also closing the infusion unit for cancer patients, shifting the treatment to a facility staffed with lower-paid nonunion nurses. The oncology unit as well is being closed.

According to a press release from the Nurses Association, “Alta Bates plans to conduct a unilateral, sweeping ... restructuring scheme demanding RNs rebid on newly created positions that may come with very few hours.”

“We are already short-staffed, yet they are reducing the workforce,” nurse Laura Rutherford told the *Militant*.

“We have to stand up and fight back, not just for ourselves and not just for what’s going on now,” Rochelle Pardue-Okimoto, a nurse in the newborn intensive care unit, told pickets. “We have to think about the next generation.”

The Nurses Association said Jan. 9 that Sutter CEO Pat Fry received “a whopping one-year increase of 22 percent in 2012 from 2011, pushing his annual pay package to \$6,393,883” while moving to cut hospital staff.

## Puerto Rico teachers strike over pension cuts



Asociación de Maestros de Puerto Rico

Thousands of teachers in Puerto Rico, a U.S. colony, shut down schools across the island Jan. 14 and 15 to protest a new law that guts their pensions. The strike was called by Puerto Rico’s Teachers’ Association, the Teachers Federation of Puerto Rico and other unions.

“Until now teachers who retired after 30 years received a pension of 75 percent of their salary,” Teachers’ Association leader José Meléndez told the *Militant* Jan. 21. “Under the new law it basically becomes a savings plan tied to the ups and downs of investments. The government is carrying out the interests of the bondholders.”

“The biggest blow is that this is going to reduce the income of retired teachers,” Teachers Federation President María Lara said in a phone interview. “Teachers will pay more while they’re working and receive less when they retire.” The law raises the retirement age to 62 from 55 for new hires and suspends payments for retirees if teachers earn more than \$1,000 a month at another job.

Above, teachers protest in front of the Labor Department.

— SETH GALINSKY

## Showings of paintings by Antonio Guerrero, one of the Cuban Five *I Will Die the Way I’ve Lived*



**Exhibits**  
**Minneapolis, Minn.**  
**February 4-28**  
Opening reception: Fri., Feb. 7, 6 p.m. Regla de Oro — Art Gallery and Fair Trade Gifts, 2743 Lyndale Ave. S. Tel.: (612) 866-1247; (612) 378-7134. Exhibition schedule: Tue.-Fri., 12PM-7PM; Sat., 11AM-7PM.; Sun., 11AM-4 PM

**Montreal, Canada**  
**Thurs., Feb. 6, 5 p.m**  
“Art and Liberation.” Université de Montréal, 3200, Jean-Brillant, Room B-3260. Speakers: Alain González González, Cuban consul general; Claude Morin, honorary professor; Félix Vincent Ardea, student; Catinca Adriana Stan, teaching assistant. Tel.: (438) 822-9500.

# Chilean longshore workers strike 15 ports

**Continued from front page**  
trade runs through its 33 ports, including copper and agriculture shipments. Chile is the second largest copper producer in the world and among the top exporters of table grapes, apples, blueberries and peaches.

One of the struck ports, San Antonio, handles 80 percent of the country’s fruit exports. According to *El Diario Financiero*, blueberry bosses have been able to ship just half their crops through operating ports. Agribusiness owners are demanding that the government intervene to end the strike.

According to Solar, 400 of the 650 workers at the Angamos port are members of the union, most of them day laborers. The state-owned

port is run by Ultraport, a subsidiary of Ultramar, which operates ports throughout South America. Workers went on strike Dec. 23 after voting down Ultraport’s contract offer.

“The day laborers are in a precarious position,” Solar said. “Even if they’ve worked for the company for 10 years they still have to go to the company dispatch window to see if there is work for them the next day.”

The police have been harassing the strikers, Solar said. “There are more than 40 police pressuring us on the picket lines.”

The union’s “attempt to include the day laborers in collective bargaining is outside the framework of existing law,” Ultraport spokesperson Rodrigo Cuadra, told the *Militant* via email

Jan. 20.  
Some 7,000 port workers have joined the solidarity strikes since Jan. 14. “We have gone out in solidarity with the workers at Angamos,” regional union spokesperson Pedro Riquelme said by phone from Coronel, Chile. “We want Ultraport to negotiate with the union at Angamos. But we are also raising a demand that we’ve had for a long time to get back pay for the half-hour lunch break from 2005 to 2013.”  
Longshore workers won the paid break last year, Riquelme said, but the companies have refused to make the pay retroactive.  
Port workers have held marches in support of the strike throughout the country.

## 25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



**February 3, 1989**  
The interests of all working people were set back when the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that a Richmond, Virginia, ordinance setting aside 30 percent of public construction contracts for minority contractors was unconstitutional.  
The battle for affirmative action to overcome racist, sexist and other divisions in our class is a key part of uniting our class to fight effectively for other advances.  
Overcoming these divisions and uniting workers can only be achieved through struggles that include the battle against discrimination. The union movement should be at the center of mobilizations demanding the establishment and enforcement of affirmative action quotas to assure preferential hiring and upgrading of workers who are Black, Latino and women.



**February 3, 1964**  
JAN. 28 — The drive of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee to cut through the hypocrisy of tokenism and make Atlanta, Georgia, an open city for Negroes is gaining momentum.  
The campaign took a new turn Saturday, Jan. 25, when 400 students rallied on Morehouse College campus and then walked to the downtown area, divided up into flying squads, and tried to enter restaurants and hotels which had not desegregated.  
About 250 of the Negroes were met downtown by 125 white-robed Ku Klux Klansmen who had been picketing those hotels which had desegregated. The Negroes chanted: “The KKK ain’t what it used to be” and “KKK must go.” Some Negroes “integrated” KKK lines, walking between the Klansmen and singing freedom songs.



**February 4, 1939**  
Why was Barcelona abandoned without a fight? Why is the Loyalist army fleeing, disorganized and demoralized? Why is Franco winning? Every anti-fascist must know the answer, if we are to defeat fascism elsewhere.  
The social democrats, the Stalinists and the anarchists answer by blaming the “great democracies” for not providing the Loyalists with food and ammunition. But this answer explains nothing.  
The salvation of Spain lay, first of all, in following a policy of class struggle in Spain, and it was abandoned for the fatal perspective of currying favor with the “great democracies.”  
The unutterable tragedy of the Spanish workers is that the criminal policy of their Stalinist-socialist-anarchist leadership prevailed to the bitter end.



# Omaha plant explosion

**Continued from front page**

duction line who was burned on his face and hands, told the *Omaha World Herald* he “thought something exploded and suddenly felt engulfed by flames.”

Nate Lewis, 21, told the *JournalStar.com* of Lincoln that he saw fire, then debris falling from the third floor ceiling. “It was pitch black in there. I just had to feel my way to get out.”

Forklift driver Kendrick Houston, 38, and Jamar White, who was outside when he was struck with fire, tried to re-enter the building to find co-workers, but were turned away by heat and smoke, reported the *Herald*.

Grain dust is highly combustible in large concentrations and an explosion hazard if improperly handled. Scott Allen, spokesman for the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, told the *Herald* that the agency’s investigation could take up to six months to complete.

In 2002, a 45-year-old worker was killed at the factory when he fell into a large running mixing tank he was cleaning, according to OSHA. The agency cited the company for five serious and four lesser violations and issued fines totaling \$20,350. In negotiations that followed, some of the citations were wiped clean and fines reduced to \$13,000.

In 2012, International Nutrition paid

more than \$10,000 to settle a half dozen OSHA citations, including for lack of required safety guards on machinery, hand-power tool protection and electrical system code violations.

“Workers want a safe workplace. We want to be able to go home safe at the end of the day,” said Jeff Kringle, who was sitting with a fellow truck driver at a fast-food restaurant near the plant looking out the window at the pile of twisted metal. “At the same time, we don’t want a bunch of things crammed down our throats in the name of safety. A truck driver can be fined thousands of dollars for just glancing at his cellphone. But companies like this can have people injured and killed and end up paying less.”



Militant/Jacquie Henderson

**International Nutrition’s animal feed plant in Omaha, Neb., Jan. 21, the day after two workers were killed and 17 injured following explosion and collapse of three-story facility.**

About six hours after the explosion and collapse at International Nutrition, two workers were killed and a third hospitalized in an explosion at Mid-

American Steel and Wire factory in Madill, Okla. No information on the cause of the blast, which started in the plant furnace, has yet been released.

## Internal Revenue Service attack on IFCO

**Continued from front page**

lar filed a Protest and Appeal with the IRS on behalf of IFCO. If the IRS recommendation is upheld and implemented, IFCO could be liable for five years of back taxes.

“This is a political attack on our history and our work,” Gail Walker, co-director of IFCO, told the *Militant*. “We intend to fight it.”

IFCO, founded in 1966, carries out and sponsors numerous projects. Since 1992 it has been best known for “Friendshipment caravans” to bring humanitarian aid to the people of Cuba.

The IRS initiated an audit of IFCO in March 2011 after receiving letters from two members of Congress, Democrat Brad Sherman of California and Republican Sue Myrick of North Carolina. They urged the agency to revoke IFCO’s tax-exempt status for backing a project called Viva Palestina.

The audit, conducted by IRS employee Dawn Goldberg, took two and a half years. Its focus was IFCO’s decision to adopt Viva Palestina as a project. Viva Palestina, based in the U.K., describes itself as a group that organizes convoys to bring food and medical supplies to people in the Gaza Strip.

The IRS report, dated Oct. 22, 2013, says its conclusions relied on “several articles and at least one comprehensive report (the Investigative Project on Terrorism — ‘IPT’) posted on the Internet. These postings appear to support the alleged connection between Viva Palestina and Hamas.”

On that basis, the IRS report concludes that since “funding of HAMAS, a designated terrorist organization, is an illegal activity,” IFCO is not eligible for tax-exempt status.

Viva Palestina is not on the U.S. Department of State list of Foreign Terrorist Organizations. Nor is it on the Treasury Department list of “specially designated nationals” that are “owned or controlled by, or acting for or on behalf of” countries or terrorist groups singled out by Washington.

### Friendshipment caravans to Cuba

Another political target of the IRS are IFCO’s humanitarian aid caravans to Cuba, which the IRS says were “in violation of U.S. sanctions on Cuba.”

“The Friendshipment to Cuba is an open, above-board, well publicized program to counter the blockade of Cuba with educational and medical supplies,”

Stolar told the *Militant*.

He pointed out that the Treasury Department’s Office of Foreign Assets Control, which is responsible for enforcing the U.S. government’s sanctions on Cuba, has never taken any action or imposed any penalties against IFCO in the more than 20 years the caravans have been operated.

The IRS report itself says that in 1992 OFAC “issued a license to IFCO” for “medical supplies, bicycles, and school supplies” it took to Cuba and “OFAC has not conducted investigations into the more recent IFCO caravans to Cuba.”

The IRS also cites a number of other IFCO projects, including its support for U.S. students attending the Latin American School of Medicine in Cuba and for fights against police frame-ups and incarceration. The IRS claims defense committees sponsored by IFCO benefit “a specific individual or small group of individuals” and are thus for “private benefit.”

The IRS “had a complete misunderstanding” of why IFCO supports such committees, Stolar said. Defense com-

mittees “are built around broader educational roles, like educating on political and racial incarceration, the rights of journalists and other important questions.”

The IRS, he said, “disagrees with IFCO’s politics, not whether it meets tax-exemption laws.”

The IRS has a history of targeting groups for political reasons. Last year Lois Lerner, IRS director of exempt organizations, was forced to apologize for agents going after groups associating with the Tea Party in an effort to deny them tax-exempt status.

“This isn’t the first time the government has threatened us,” Gail Walker told the *Militant*. In 2008 a New York court unsuccessfully sought to find Lucius Walker, then IFCO’s executive director, in contempt for refusing to testify about individuals who traveled to Cuba.

“We’re asking everyone to help get the word out about our fight,” Gail Walker said.

For more information and to find out how you can help, go to [www.ifconews.org](http://www.ifconews.org).

## Ukraine protest

**Continued from front page**

took to the streets, demanding that Yanukovich resign. A central slogan at opposition demonstrations has been, “Glory to Ukraine! Glory to the nation! Ukraine above all!”

The leadership of the protests comprises a heterogeneous coalition of bourgeois parties pressing for integration into the EU. Three of these parties have seats in Parliament: Fatherland, led by jailed former Prime Minister Yulia Tymoschenko; UDAR — punch in Ukrainian — led by Vitali Klitschko, a former heavyweight boxing champion who campaigns on an anti-corruption platform; and ultrarightist Svoboda (Freedom), which scapegoats Jews and has introduced bills to ban abortions and “communist ideology.”

The new law passed by Parliament last week bans the unauthorized public installation of tents or stages and the use of loudspeakers in public and imposes jail terms for participating in “mass disorder” and wearing balaclavas or helmets.

Some protesters who fought with police defiantly wore saucepans and colanders on their heads. Some 1,500 protesters needed medical attention after the clashes.

### Centuries under Russian boot

The suppression of national rights in Ukraine goes back centuries. Eastern Ukraine became a possession of the Romanov Dynasty in 1654 and from that time on the feudal monarchy carried out a policy of Russification there. While rule over the western part changed hands between Austria, Poland and Russia over centuries, the tsars banned the Ukrainian language, suppressed the Ukrainian church and promoted Russian colonization, in the areas

**Continued on page 9**

### Who are the Cuban Five?



Fernando González, Gerardo Hernández, Antonio Guerrero, Ramón Labañino and René González are Cuban revolutionaries who during the 1990s accepted assignments from the Cuban government to gather information on the operations and plans of Cuban-American paramilitary groups based in southern Florida. These rightist outfits, organizing on U.S. soil with virtual impunity, have a long record of carrying out bombings, assassinations and other deadly attacks, both against targets in Cuba and supporters of the Cuban Revolution in the United States, Puerto Rico and elsewhere.

On Sept. 12, 1998, the five were arrested by the FBI. They were framed up and convicted on a variety of charges, which included acting as unregistered agents of the Cuban government and possession of false identity documents. Without a shred of evidence, three were charged with “conspiracy to gather and transmit national defense information.”

Hernández was also convicted of conspiracy to commit murder, based on the pretext that he bore responsibility for the Cuban government’s 1996 shutdown of two Brothers to the Rescue aircraft that had invaded Cuban airspace in disregard of Havana’s repeated warnings. He is serving two life terms plus 15 years. His wife Adriana Pérez is barred from entering the United States.

The frame-up and continued incarceration of the Five is part of Washington’s decades-long campaign to punish the working people of Cuba for making and defending their socialist revolution.

René González returned to Cuba in May 2013, halfway through his parole.



# No recovery for workers, despite UK gov't claims

BY JONATHAN SILBERMAN  
AND CATHARINA TIRSÉN

LONDON — “When we came to office, our economy was on its knees. Three and a half years later, we are turning a corner,” British Prime Minister David Cameron said in his New Year’s address. “Our recovery is real, but it’s also fragile, and there are more difficult decisions ahead.” But for working people, there has been no recovery and “difficult decisions” signal further attacks on our living standards.

A week later Chancellor of the Exchequer George Osborne announced that a £25 billion (\$41 billion) cut in government spending would be needed by 2017-18, including £12 billion (\$20 billion) from welfare payments.

Unemployment remains higher than it was before the 2008 financial crisis. Real wages have declined. And five years later, gross domestic product remains 2.5 percent below pre-recession levels.

In June 2013 factory output was 10 percent below 2007. This is the slowest economic recovery following a recession since the 1930s.

Talk of “recovery” is based on what appears to be nothing more than an uptick in the business cycle that includes some increased employment. Official unemployment is down to 7.1 percent, the lowest level since 2009. Some 30 million people are working in the U.K. today. But of these, nearly 8 million are working temporary or part-time jobs, including nearly 1.5 million doing so because they cannot get full-time work.

“Slight falls in headline unemployment levels are hiding the fact that more and more workers are taking part-time or temporary contracts because they can’t get anything else,” commented Jacob Mohun of the New Economics Foundation.

Close to 1 million agency workers are on “zero-hour” contracts with no guaranteed hours.

“I do engineering repair work and they want you to be on call all the time,” Carl Towland, from Baguley in Manchester, told the *Militant*. “Yet some weeks you can get as little as seven hours’ work.”

Real unemployment is closer to 5

million, nearly double the official rate, according to figures released by the Trades Union Congress last September. More than 2.2 million jobless workers want employment but are not counted in official jobless figures. Total unemployment is nearly 1 million higher than in 2008, the union body reports. “Unemployment may have started to fall in recent months,” commented TUC General Secretary Frances O’Grady, “but we are still in the midst of a job crisis.”

## Real wages decline

Government figures released last year show that real wages have fallen by an average of 3 percent annually since 2009. One-third of employed workers have experienced wage freezes or reductions between 2010 and 2011, according to the Institute for Fiscal Studies, and 70 percent have been hit with real wage cuts.

At the same time, trade union membership in the four years following the 2008 crash declined annually by 100,000. For the last couple years, unionization levels have been roughly 26 percent, down from 32 percent in 1995.

In describing the uptick, capitalist economic commentators have pointed to increased consumption, fueled in part by a rise in housing prices pumped up by the government’s “Help to Buy” mortgage assistance scheme. Other personal debt has also grown, and now stands at a record £1.43 trillion (\$2.3 trillion).

A growing number of ruling-class figures and economists are voicing concern that historically low interest rates and other government measures are helping inflate a new financial bubble that could lead to another crash.

Another problem they point to is the fact that Britain continues to import substantially more than it exports, despite a fall in the relative value of the country’s currency, which should make its goods cheaper and therefore more competitive on the world market. The trade deficit remains at 4.4 percent of GDP, the highest of the G7 countries, which include Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, U.K. and U.S.

“Were domestic consumption to slow



Militant/Catharina Tirsén

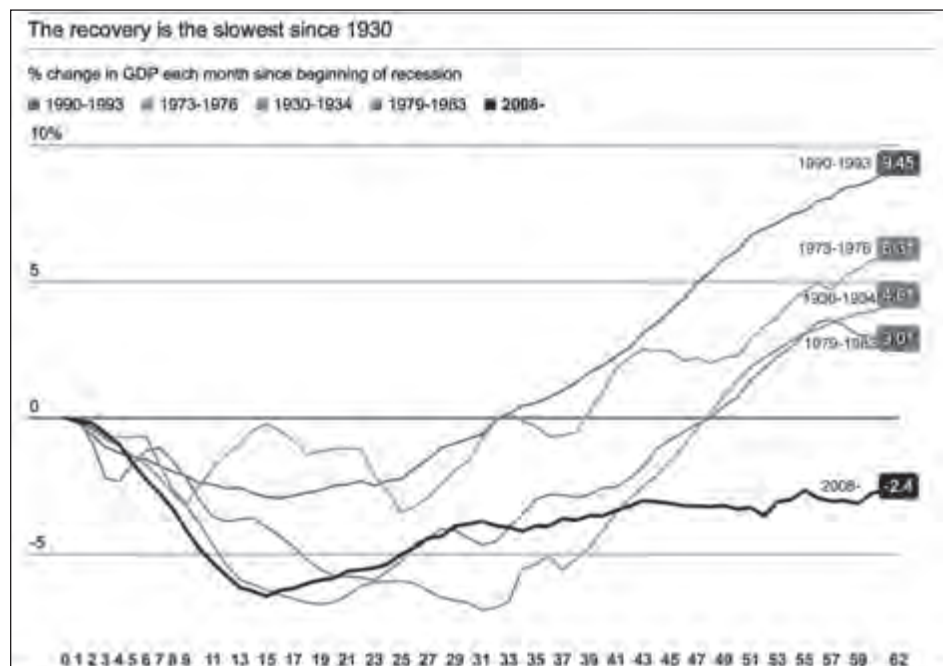
Nearly 1 million workers in Britain are on “zero-hour” contracts, with no guaranteed work. Above, workers at Hovis bakery in Wigan, England, Aug. 31 strike over use of these contracts.

down, it is doubtful that foreign demand would come to the rescue,” stated a Jan. 14 *Financial Times* editorial. “In spite of sterling’s steep depreciation, Britain continues to run a large current account deficit. This is unlikely to narrow in the near-term, given the prolonged economic uncertainty in the eurozone — the UK’s foremost commercial partner.”

At the heart of the crisis, however, is a slowdown in production and trade on a world scale. Total output in Europe, Britain’s main trading partner, is down 10 percent from 2008.

What capitalists term “productivity” — measured by the value of output per worker over a given time — has declined in the U.K. since 2008 and lags behind those of its G7 rivals by some 16 percent. Bank lending to businesses has dropped every year since 2008 because many companies see no way to increase profits through expanded production or because banks consider loans too risky.

If the prospects for a real recovery of capitalism are bleak around the world, they’re especially so for the United Kingdom.



More than five years after 2008 recession, gross domestic product in U.K. has still not reached pre-recession levels. Chart compares this (dark line) with 62-month period following four previous recessions where GDP reached pre-recession levels within three to four years.

## UK gov't cuts back military

BY JONATHAN SILBERMAN

LONDON — Government cuts to the armed forces of the United Kingdom, driven by British capitalism’s long crisis of profitability, have weakened London’s capacity for military action.

The cuts mean that Britain “won’t have full spectrum capabilities and the ability to be a full partner [of the U.S.] as they have been in the past,” former U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates told a BBC radio program Jan. 16.

Prime Minister David Cameron downplayed the shift. “We have the fourth largest defense budget anywhere in the world,” he said later that day. “We are investing in future capabilities. We are a first-class player in terms of defense.”

There’s no doubting the decline. Military spending in 1985 was 5.5 percent of gross domestic product. Today it’s 2.2 percent. At the time of the 1982 war to maintain Britain’s Malvinas Islands colony, the Royal Navy had some 60 operational frigates and destroyers.

Today it has 19. The Royal Air Force had 30 fast jet squadrons 20 years ago but now has 11. The size of the regular army is down from 163,000 soldiers in 1978 to 102,000 today. That figure is planned to decrease further to 82,000 by 2020.

“Unattended, our current course leads to a strategically incoherent force structure,” Chief of Defence Staff General Sir Nicholas Houghton told the Royal United Services Institute in December. “Exquisite equipment, but insufficient resources to man that equipment or train on it. This is what the Americans call the specter of the hollow force.”

Houghton also spoke of the government’s lack of will to use military force and provocatively praised rival Paris. “I have observed with some admiration the ability of French forces to operate with a mindset of aggressive risk management,” he said, in a reference to recent French military intervention in Africa.

## Events in United Kingdom Demand Freedom for Cuban Five

### Manchester

Sat., Feb. 15.

2 p.m. ‘Free the Cuban 5’ Meeting in Support of International Commission of Inquiry into Case of Cuban Five. *Speakers:* representative of Cuban Embassy; John Nicholson, barrister, former deputy leader Manchester Council; Father Geoff Bottoms, visited three of the Five in U.S. prisons; Paul Foley, Unison.

1 p.m.-5 p.m. Exhibition of ‘I Will Die the Way I’ve Lived’: Showing of Antonio Guerrero’s prison watercolor paintings.

Central Hall, Oldham Street, M1 1JQ. Sponsored by Manchester Cuba Solidarity Campaign.

### London

March 7-8, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

International Commission of Inquiry into the Case of the Cuban 5. Law Society, 113 Chancery Lane, WC2A 1PL.



# Leon Trotsky: ‘Workers need truth for revolutionary action’

*Below is an excerpt from Writings of Leon Trotsky (1929), one of Pathfinder’s Books of the Month for January. It contains articles, interviews, and letters written after Trotsky’s expulsion from the Soviet Union and arrival in Turkey in February 1929. A central leader of the Russian Revolution, Trotsky formed the Left Opposition in 1923 to fight for the revolution’s internationalist course, championed by V. I. Lenin, against the counterrevolutionary privileged social layer headed by Josef Stalin. The excerpt is from an August 1929 open letter to the editorial board of the French opposition newspaper La Verité, which publicized the situation inside the Soviet Union and the Communist International. Copyright © 1975 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.*

## BOOKS OF THE MONTH

Dear Comrades:

You are about to publish a weekly newspaper based on the principles of the Communist Left Opposition. ...

Those ideas which you represent — the ideas of Marxism, enriched by the practice of Lenin’s party and the entire postwar revolutionary struggle of the international proletariat — will cut a path for themselves. There can be no doubt of this. All that is necessary is that these ideas be intimately tied to the facts of life, geared to actual events, and fructified by the living experience of the



**Members of Left Opposition, also known as the Bolshevik-Leninists, Moscow, 1927. Trotsky, seated, center, led faction dedicated to revolutionary internationalism and restoration of workers’ democracy inside Soviet Union and Communist International. Exiled by Stalin to Turkey in 1929, Trotsky promoted launching of French Left Opposition paper *La Verité*.**

masses. Your weekly will serve this end.

Thereby it will become an irreplaceable instrument for elaborating the platform of the French Opposition — a platform that is correct in principle and viable. Only pedants are capable of thinking that a platform can be hatched in an office and then proclaimed as a ready-made premise for political activity. No, a fighting program can only set down and generalize the political experience that has already been gone through, and in this way create conditions for broader and more successful experiences in the future.

Marx once remarked that a single actual step of the movement is more important than a dozen programs. Marx had in mind programs which are created outside the actual struggle, primarily for the consolation of their creators. Marx’s words, alas, apply most directly to the present position of the French Communist Opposition. Wherein lies its weakness? In this, that it has not waged a political struggle, or, in those cases where this was undertaken, it was done only episodically. This inevitably leads to the formation and preservation of shut-in self-sufficient circles, which, as everyone knows, never pass the test of events. A continuation of this condition threatens to cruelly compromise the French Opposition and for a long time to bar its road to the future. A concentration of all the forces of the Left Opposition faction

is indispensable. Your *La Verité* must become the organ for such a concentration. ...

A moment now approaches clearly favorable for the recruitment of revolutionary workers under the banner of Marx and Lenin.

Rejecting the circle spirit, with its petty interests and ambitions, *La Verité* must unite around itself all the virile, healthy, and genuinely revolutionary elements of the Communist Left Opposition. The vanguard of the workers needs this today as urgently as it needs its daily bread.

The attitude of the revolutionary press toward its readers is the most important test of a political line. The *reformists* deliberately lie to their readers in order to preserve the bourgeois system. The *centrists* employ lies to cloak their vacillations, their uncertainty, their capitulation, and their adventures. They do not trust themselves and therefore do not trust their readers. They are of the opinion that the worker can be led only if he is blindfolded and pulled by the hand. Such is the spirit of the official press of the Comintern nowadays. It has no faith in the workers. It exercises guardianship over them, as if they were little children. When they ask awkward questions, it sternly shakes its finger at them. Precisely this engenders apathy in the ranks of the party and the growing vacuum around it.

The mass of workers does not consist of infants! It consists of people with the harsh experience of life. It does not tolerate nursemaids, whose strictness is as a rule directly proportional to their stupidity. The worker seeks, not commands, but assistance in political orientation. For this it is first of all necessary to tell him what is. Not to distort, not to tendentiously select, not to embellish, not to sugarcoat, but honestly to say what is. The politics of communism can only gain from a truthful clarification of reality. Untruth is needed for salvaging false reputations, but not for the education of the masses. The workers need the truth as an instrument of revolutionary action.

Your paper bears the name *La Verité*. This name, like all others, has been amply abused. Nevertheless it is a good and honorable name. The *truth* is always revolutionary. To lay bare the truth of their position before the oppressed is to lead them to the highroad of revolution. To tell the truth about the rulers is to undermine the foundations of their rule. To tell the truth about the reformist bureaucracy is to condemn it in the consciousness of the masses. To tell the truth about the *centrists* is to help the workers assure a correct leadership of the Communist International. This is the task of your weekly. All forms and manifestations of the labor movement must be conscientiously illumined. An attentive reader must become convinced that if he wants to learn the genuine facts of the proletarian struggle in France and in the whole world he must seek them in *La Verité*. He will in this way adopt our standpoint, for it will loom before him in the light of facts and statistics. Only the tendency which, together with the workers and at their head, seeks a correct orientation can create for itself conscious and devoted partisans who do not know disillusionment and demoralization.

Dear friends! I am with you with all my heart. I joyfully accept your proposal for collaboration. I will do everything in my power to make this collaboration regular and systematic. I will try to supply articles for each issue on the situation in Russia, on events in world life, and on the problems of the international labor movement.

Warmly wishing you success,  
*L. Trotsky*

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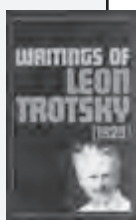
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# Gov’t spying attack on workers’ rights

President Barack Obama’s Jan. 17 speech on National Security Agency spying was intended to convince us that expanding spy operations and methods are nothing “ordinary folks” need to pay attention to. That’s for the bad guys. Don’t worry, we are told, spies are our friends, they’re just like us, and the president himself is on the case.

While the NSA’s data mining program is not directed at the working class in the U.S. today, the ongoing assault on rights and constitutional protections by the capitalists’ government is very much our concern.

Starting in the 1970s and escalating rapidly after 9/11, the propertied rulers have sought acceptance for their stepped-up spying as minor intrusions of privacy required of “us all” in face of “terrorist” threats to the homeland. “Why should you care if you’re not a terrorist?” they say.

NSA Internet spying is just one small piece of the government’s network of snoops, informants and provocateurs. The mass collection of communications records are an extension of airport luggage and body searches, X-ray screening in government buildings, appeals to report “suspicious bags” on the subway, increasing use of conspiracy charges to “stop attacks before they happen,” and stepped-up targeting of foreign-born residents, whether “le-

gal” or “illegal.”

While many of these efforts are today primarily used by Washington against al-Qaedaist organizations and adherents, the rulers seek to have them in place because they know they will face greater challenges in the future. As the crisis of capitalist production and trade deepens, the bosses will continue to increase their attacks on the living standards, working conditions and rights of the working class. They have a premonition of the coming class battles it will engender, which is part of what drives their attack on rights today.

The working class is the ultimate target of the bosses’ wiretaps, black-bag jobs, frame-ups and provocations. In addition to NSA electronic spying, the rulers are ramping up the FBI’s “counterterrorism” units. The New York cops’ Intelligence Unit alone numbers over 1,000. As labor actions and political protests increase, government plants and informers will be deployed to disrupt them.

The big majority of workers and farmers do not yet directly feel these developments are aimed at them. But increasingly more focused probes by the rulers will be seen as what they are — and resisted — as working people and the labor movement are pressed into struggle.

# Fight against Russian boot fuels protests

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under its control.

By the early 1900s Ukraine made up 20 percent of the population of the Russian empire, which at the time was comprised in its majority of non-Russian peoples who faced varying degrees of subjugation. It was a “prison house of nations,” in the words of V.I. Lenin, central leader of the Bolshevik Party and 1917 Russian Revolution.

The Ukrainian bourgeoisie remained small and weak. The ruling class and urban middle classes were drawn from Russia and other nationalities. “In the Ukraine and White Russia,” wrote Russian revolutionary leader Leon Trotsky in 1932, “the landlord, capitalist, lawyer, journalist, was a Great Russian, a Pole, a Jew, a foreigner; the rural population was wholly Ukrainian and White Russian.”

At the same time, Ukraine was a key conquest of the empire, serving as a breadbasket for Russia and major source of its coal and iron production.

Among the central tasks of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution under Lenin’s leadership was the emancipation of tens of millions of oppressed peoples — from the culturally more advanced people of the Baltic region to the Muslims of the Caucasus to nomadic tribes of the Far East.

The Bolshevik Party’s championing of the right of oppressed nations to self-determination leading up to the revolution was decisive in uniting, educating and organizing the working class to take political power, which included forging an alliance with the peasant majority from all backgrounds.

The Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party stated in November 1919 that Bolsheviks in Ukraine “must put into practice the right of the working people to study in the Ukrainian language and to speak their native language in all Soviet institutions; they must in every way counteract attempts at Russification that push the Ukrainian language into the background.”

The new policy of Ukrainization helped the Bolsheviks win over the Ukrainian Borotba (struggle) Party, which merged with the Ukrainian Communist Party in 1920.

## Stalin murder machine

But by the early 1920s the degeneration of the Bolshevik Party had begun, personified by the rise to power of Josef Stalin after the death of Lenin in 1924. Stalin headed a counterrevolution representing the interests of a growing privileged social layer centered in the increasingly bureaucratic state apparatus. This reactionary caste reversed the Bolshevik’s course and resurrected the Great Russian chauvinism of the em-

pire, including the re-subjection of oppressed people, this time under the false banner of “communism.”

“Nowhere did the purges and repression assume such a savage character as they did in the Ukraine,” Trotsky wrote in 1939.

Russification of Ukraine was revived. From 1959 to 1989 the number of Russians rose from 16.9 percent of Ukraine’s population to 22.1 percent.

When the Stalinist regime in Russia and Eastern Europe finally collapsed under pressure of growing social contradictions in the early 1990s, the new regime continued to dominate Ukraine, whose industry remained closely linked to that of Russia. Moscow supplies 60 percent of gas used in Ukraine and has turned off the spigot twice to force compliance with the Putin government’s demands.

Competing factions of emerging and aspiring capitalists arose following the collapse of the Soviet Union, drawn largely from remnants of the Soviet bureaucracy. In Ukraine, the factional contest was partially based on divisions of east and west, Russian and Ukrainian, orientation toward Moscow and the West. Meanwhile, the national aspirations among Ukrainian working people against the Russian boot remain strong.

At the end of 2004, in what became known as the Orange Revolution, hundreds of thousands of people, mostly from the western part of the country took to the streets to oppose the continuing Russian domination of the country and what they saw as a rigged election that gave the presidency to Yanukovich, who was then prime minister.

As a result, a new election was called and bourgeois opposition candidate Viktor Yushchenko was elected president, taking office in 2005, but a series of corruption scandals left him with little support by the end of his term.

Today about four out of every six people in Ukraine are ethnic Ukrainians and speak the Ukrainian language. One in six are ethnic Russians who speak Russian and roughly one in six are ethnic Ukrainians who speak Russian. Russian is the main language in much of the eastern and southern part of the country, areas which are more economically developed.

Yanukovich returned to the presidency after winning elections in 2010. In July 2012 his Party of Regions successfully passed a language law that encourages making Russian an official language in some regions.

The *Ukrainian Week* reported in March last year that the top eight Ukrainian TV stations broadcast less than a quarter of their prime-time content in Ukrainian. Less than 5 percent of the songs on the top six radio stations were in Ukrainian.

# Obama, NSA spying

**Continued from front page**

supposed to be kept top secret.

The spotlight shown on certain spy agency practices by former NSA contractor Edward Snowden’s leaks has stoked distrust of the U.S. government at a time when Obama’s approval ratings are at an all-time low.

“What I did not do is stop these programs,” Obama said, because “I felt that they made us more secure” and nothing “indicated that our intelligence community has sought to violate the law or is cavalier about the civil liberties of their fellow citizens.”

“After all,” he said, “the folks at NSA and other intelligence agencies are our neighbors. They’re our friends and family. They’ve got electronic bank and medical records like everybody else. They have kids on Facebook and Instagram.”

Obama laid out his personal opinions and proposals and a series of unilateral executive orders to tweak the electronic spy programs, further centralize their management by the executive office, and conduct more administration studies and reviews.

As Obama both praised and sought to assuage public unease over stepped-up spy operations since Sept. 11, 2001, he conceded that there have been a few problems in the distant past where U.S. spies “proved not to be immune to the abuse of surveillance.”

“In the 1960s, government spied on civil rights leaders and critics of the Vietnam War,” he said. He neglected to mention decades of FBI spying and disruption targeting unions, Black rights groups, socialist and other political groups that continues today.

“I have approved a new presidential directive,” Obama said, that “will strengthen executive branch oversight of our intelligence activities.”

“We will reform programs and procedures in place to provide greater transparency to our surveillance activities,” he said. This involves asking the Director of National Intelligence to periodically consider declassifying some decisions of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court on spy warrant requests. Of the 1,856 secret warrant requests in 2012, the FISA court approved all, according to government information. As an example of transparency, Obama said that more than 40 such decisions have now been declassified.

Turning to the heart of the public clamor — the metadata program — Obama said, “It is important that the capability that this program is designed to meet is preserved.”

But, to allay public concern, Obama said he has ordered a transition that would end the program “as it currently exists.” His idea is to switch the hosting of the huge database of phone and email information out of NSA control, possibly forcing phone and Internet corporations to keep it or contracting out to a private company. But these various options “pose difficult problems” and “more work needed to be done to determine exactly how this system might work,” he said.

In the meantime, Obama said NSA would now be required to go to the FISA court for permission whenever they wanted to access the metadata. This measure provoked some complaints among sections of the ruling class as an unnecessary bureaucratic nuisance. Obama said, he was ordering spy agencies and the attorney general to give him more ideas to consider.

Turning to Snowden’s leaks that revealed extensive U.S. spying on government leaders from Germany to Brazil Obama said he wanted to take steps “to maintain the trust and cooperation among people and leaders around the world.”

His new presidential decree, he said, should assure everyone that data from spying abroad would only be used for “legitimate national security purposes.”

But it would continue to be used for a few things, like “counterintelligence, counterterrorism, counterproliferation, cybersecurity, force protection for our troops and our allies, and combating transnational crime, including sanctions evasion.” The latter refers to Washington’s campaigns to impose economic hardships on people whose governments it wants to change, including Cuba, North Korea and Iran.

Foreign leaders need have no worries they will be targeted, he said, unless “there is a compelling national security purpose.”

Finally, Obama announced that he was assigning John Podesta, his counselor, to oversee yet another “comprehensive review of big data and privacy.”